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Newport, R.I.**

**Improving Counter-Piracy Operations in East Africa**

**by**

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**A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**27 October 2010**

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## **ABSTRACT**

AFRICOM and CENTCOM are failing to holistically solve the problem of piracy in Somalia. Failure to address this problem correctly prevents the United States from achieving its strategic goals in the region. Piracy has been growing despite the efforts of the United States, European Union, International, and Regional communities. Piracy must be seen as a symptom and an outgrowth of the failed state of Somalia. Adjustments must be made to effectively address this. Specifically, the U.S. military needs to adjust its mission, establish unity of command, establish a new area of operations, and employ a balanced JTF to support the integration of interagency, coalition, host nation, and regional partners to effectively neutralize Piracy in East Africa. This paper examines the current CENTCOM and AFRICOM solutions. It identifies the United States' Strategic Objectives in the region. It analyzes the Operational factors of time, space, force, the Center of Gravity, and identifies the required friendly force capabilities. Finally, the paper draws conclusions and offers recommendations on how the United States should adjust to more effectively pursue its objectives in the region.

## INTRODUCTION

AFRICOM and CENTCOM are failing to holistically solve the problem of Piracy in Somalia. Ever since 2005, even with the introduction of coalition counter-piracy naval forces, piracy off of Somalia has increased each year.<sup>1</sup> Pirate activity destabilizes Somalia, the region, and impacts the global economy.<sup>2</sup> Failure to effectively address piracy is preventing the United States from obtaining its strategic goals in the region. It is also undermining our ability to support our global and regional friends in the attainment of their strategic goals.

In order to address Piracy, AFRICOM and CENTCOM must first understand the problem. It is more than just the physical act of pirating a merchant vessel and holding it for ransom. Piracy is a symptom of the failed state of Somalia.<sup>3</sup> Somalia has been a failed state for the last 18+ years. The solution is not going to be quick or easy.

The eradication of Piracy off of Somalia requires a holistic solution that targets the root causes of the problem<sup>4</sup>. The two combatant commands cannot continue to treat just the symptom, Piracy at sea, and expect it to go away. The current track record proves that they have an ineffective solution. The United States, European Union, and other nations have poured resources and forces into the area and piracy has increased.<sup>5</sup> This fact should highlight the failure to address the root causes and the inadequacy of the approach. The

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond Gilpin, *Counting the Costs of Somali Piracy*, United States Institute of Peace Working Paper, (Washington, D.C: United States Institute for Peace, 2007), 7.

<sup>2</sup> Raymond Gilpin, *Counting the Costs of Somali Piracy*, United States Institute of Peace Working Paper, (Washington, D.C: United States Institute for Peace, 2007), 13.

<sup>3</sup> Ambassador Phillip Carter, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, US State Department (transcript, Chatham House, London, 22 July 2009), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Ambassador Phillip Carter, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, US State Department (transcript, Chatham House, London, 22 July 2009), 4.

<sup>5</sup> Edith M. Lederer, "Kenya says West wasting money on anti-piracy ships," *Yahoo! News*, 25 September 2010, [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100926/ap\\_on\\_re\\_us/un\\_un\\_world\\_summit\\_kenya](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100926/ap_on_re_us/un_un_world_summit_kenya) (accessed 30 September 2010).

United States military needs to adjust its mission, establish unity of command, establish a new area of operations, and employ a balanced JTF to support the integration of interagency, coalition, host nation, and regional partners to effectively neutralize Piracy in East Africa.

To gain a deeper understanding and to support the development of a more effective solution, the problem must be examined holistically. First, this paper examines the current combatant commanders' solutions. Second, it identifies the United States' strategic and operational objectives for the region. Third, it conducts an operational analysis of the Operational factors of time, space, force, the Center of Gravity, and identifies the capabilities a friendly force must possess. Finally, it examines some specific counter-arguments, draws conclusions, and offers recommendations for improvement.

## **BACKGROUND**

AFRICOM and CENTCOM are both trying to solve parts of the piracy problem off of Somalia. Each has a subordinate military organization in the region (CENTCOM – Combined Maritime Forces) and (AFRICOM – Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa). Each organization is addressing parts of the problem within their domains but does not integrate efforts to tackle the larger problem as a cohesive whole. The inadequacies in the current construct, between the two combatant commanders, stem from the missions assigned to each organization, the lack of unity of command, and fragmented areas of operation.

### Missions

The current missions assigned by both the combatant commanders do not fully address the problem holistically. They address parts of the issue but not the whole problem. This is shown by examining the current mission statements of each organization.



CJTF-HOA mission. Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa conducts operations in the East African region to build partner nation capacity in order to promote regional security and stability, prevent conflict, and protect United States and coalition interests.<sup>6</sup> Even though this looks good on paper, CJTF-HOA provides limited support to other African nation’s militaries that are supporting the current Transitional Federal Government in Somalia.<sup>7</sup>

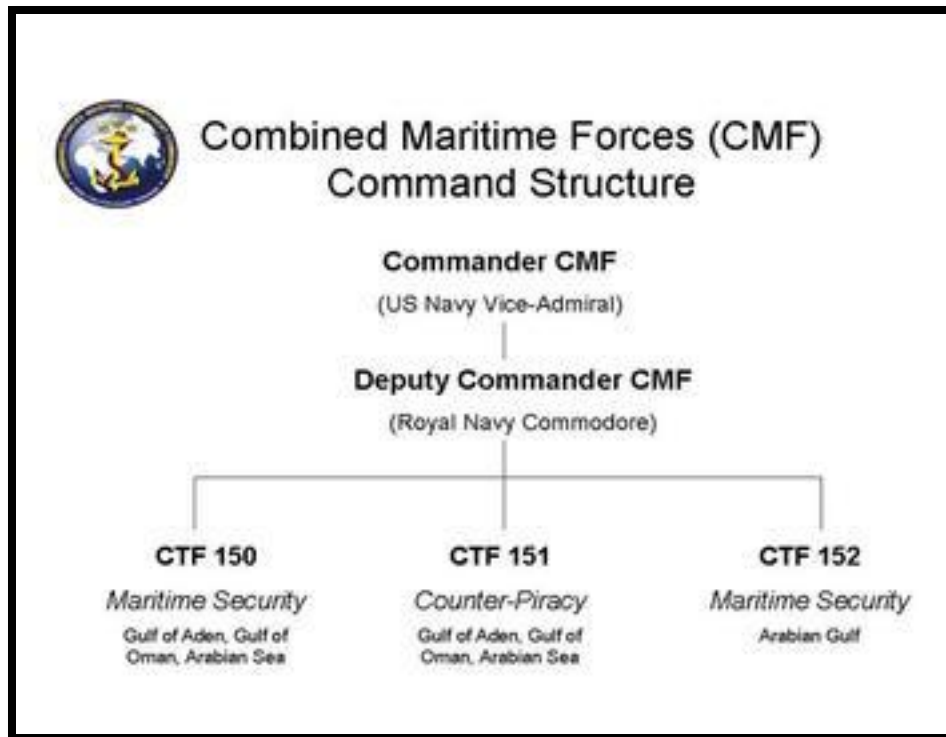
Combined Maritime Force’s mission. United States Naval Forces Central Command conducts persistent maritime operations to forward United States’ interests, deter and counter disruptive countries, defeat violent extremism and strengthen partner nations’ maritime capabilities in order to promote a secure maritime environment in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility.<sup>8</sup> To further complicate the matter, the CMF has three subordinate organizations (figure 1) that often operate in the same water space yet have different missions themselves.

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<sup>6</sup> CJTF-HOA, “Mission statement,” <http://www.hoa.africom.mil/AboutCJTF-HOA.asp> (accessed 5 September 2010).

<sup>7</sup> AFRICOM Public Affairs, “U.S. Diplomat: “We Do Not Plan, Direct or Coordinate” Military Ops for Somalia Government,” <http://www.africom.mil/getArticle.asp?art=4155&lang=0> (accessed 17 September 2010).

<sup>8</sup> USNAVCENT, Combined Maritime Forces, “Mission statement,” <http://www.cusnc.navy.mil/mission/mission.html> (accessed 17 September 2010).



**Figure 1 CMF Subordinate Organizations<sup>9</sup>**

CTF-150/152 missions. CTF-150 and CTF-152 conducts Maritime Security Operations to complement counter-terrorism and security efforts of regional nations in order to disrupt violent extremists' use of the maritime environment. The only difference between the two commands is the area where they conduct operations. CTF-151 operates in the Gulf of Aden, Oman, and the Arabian Sea. CTF-152 concentrates in the Arabian Gulf.<sup>10</sup>

CTF-151 mission. CTF-151 conducts Counter-Piracy Operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the East coast of Somalia to deter, disrupt, and suppress piracy in order to protect global maritime security and secure freedom of navigation for the benefit of all nations.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Royal Navy, "History – the RN in Bahrain and the CMF," <http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/operations-and-support/operations/united-kingdom-component-command-ukmcc/coalition-maritime-forces-cfmcc/> (accessed 17 September 2010).

<sup>10</sup> Combined Maritime Forces, "CTF-150," <http://www.cusnc.navy.mil/cmf/150/index.html> (accessed 17 September 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Combined Maritime Forces, "CTF-151," <http://www.cusnc.navy.mil/cmf/151/index.html> (accessed 17 September 2010).

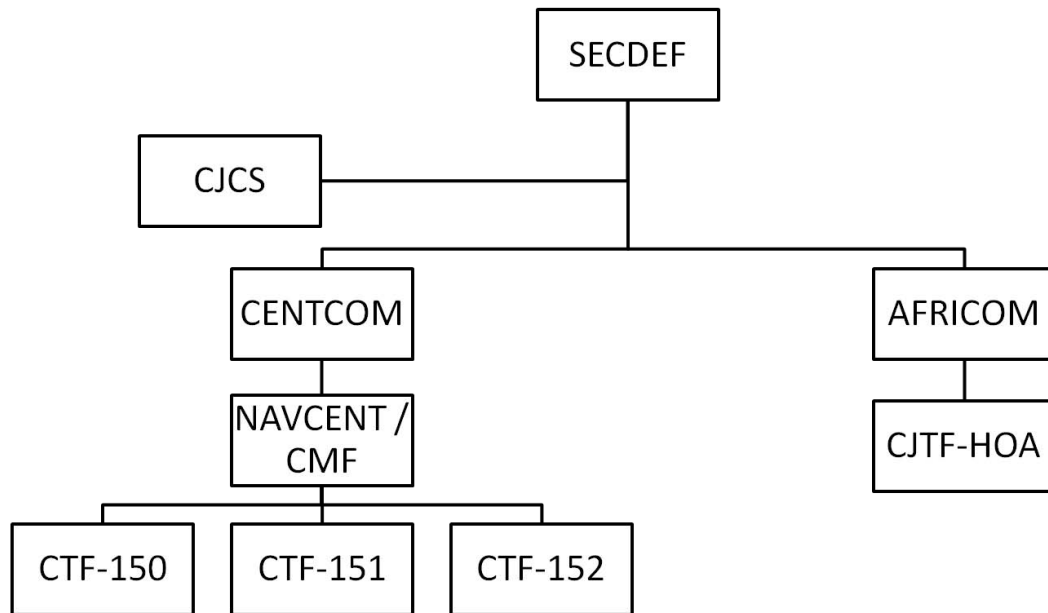
Each organization has pieces / elements of an overall mission to solve the problem. However, they don't present a holistic mission statement to address the entire problem. CJTF-HOA's mission statement is the closest to offering a holistic solution. However, they fall short in Command and Control and a fragmented Area of Operations.

### Command and Control

The current C2 arrangements do not provide unity of command. CJTF-HOA is addressing the issues ashore in Africa and CTF-151 is tackling piracy at sea. There is no unity of command between the subordinates of AFRICOM and CENTCOM. Unity of command is only achieved when you get to the very top: the National Command Authorities (Figure 2). This does not allow for responsive and integrated planning and execution. Just a small example of the inefficiency and bureaucracy present was the experience of the 13<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (January – August 2009). Marines waited for more than a month, off the coast of Djibouti, to receive permission to conduct an exercise ashore. The embarked Marines could have easily landed their entire force in a matter of hours and started the exercise.<sup>12</sup> How responsive can the C2 bureaucracy be between the two combatant commands when countering piracy or trying to stabilize Somalia if it takes over a month for a simple exercise? This friction is directly attributed to the seam created by the assigned combatant commander area of responsibilities (AORs).

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<sup>12</sup>These are the authors personal experiences as the Commanding Officer of Battalion Landing Team 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Marines. BLT 1/1 was the ground combat element for the 13<sup>th</sup> MEU during this deployment. The author was also the Commanding Officer of Detachment Alpha, 13<sup>th</sup> MEU (commanding all 13<sup>th</sup> MEU forces involved with this exercise).



**Figure 2 C2 Arrangement**

### Areas of Operation

The currently assigned subordinate unit, CJTF-HOA and CMF, areas of operation are inadequate to allow a holistic solution to the problem. The boundary between AFRICOM and CENTCOM runs along the coast of Somalia (high water mark (Figure 3))<sup>13</sup>. It creates a physical seam between AFRICOM and CENTCOM. This geographic seam does not allow a single commander to address counter-piracy issues and their root causes, Somalia instability, in a cohesive area of operation.

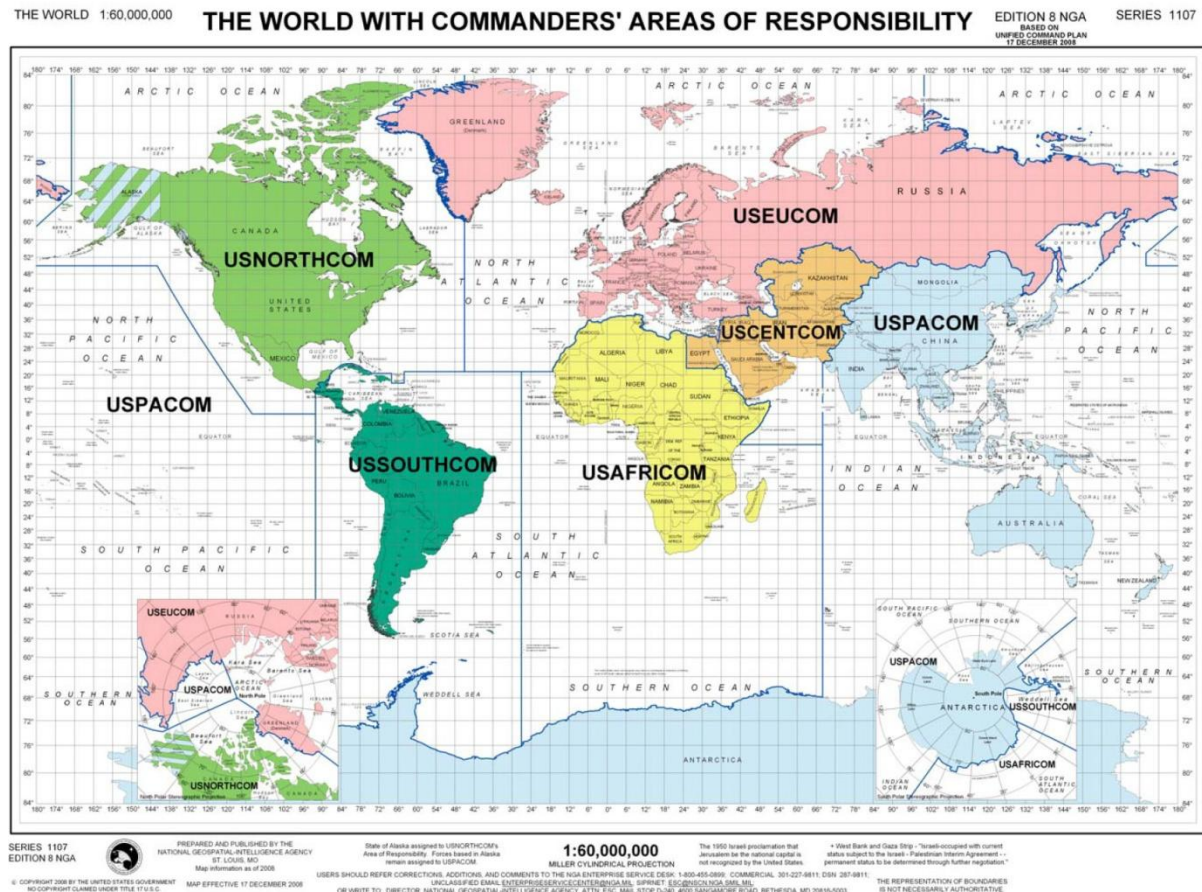
CJTF-HOA is responsible for the land in Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Seychelles.<sup>14</sup> CTF-151 is responsible for the water: the Gulf of Aden, Oman, and the Arabian Sea.<sup>15</sup> The failure to establish a single area of operation that encompasses

<sup>13</sup> Defense Department, "The World with Commanders' Areas of Responsibility," [http://www.defense.gov/specials/unifiedcommand/images/unified-command\\_world-map.jpg](http://www.defense.gov/specials/unifiedcommand/images/unified-command_world-map.jpg) (accessed 17 September 2010).

<sup>14</sup> CJTF-HOA, "Fact Sheet," <http://www.hoa.africom.mil/AboutCJTF-HOA.asp> (accessed 17 September 2010).

<sup>15</sup> Royal Navy, "History – the RN in Bahrain and the CMF," <http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/operations-and-support/operations/united-kingdom-component-command-ukmcc/coalition-maritime-forces-cfmcc/> (accessed 17 September 2010).

all the land, sea, and air space impacted by piracy and its root causes, the failed state of Somalia, creates problems. Clearly there is a seam between the two forces: CJTF-HOA and CTF-151.



**Figure 3 Combatant Commanders' AORs**

## OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

There are shortfalls between AFRICOM and CENTCOM in the current construct. In order to determine a better understanding of the problem and derive recommendations for improvement, it is necessary to conduct a quick operational analysis to help frame the problem. The first portion of the analysis will be to examine the United States' objectives.

### Objectives

The United States' strategic objectives are to regain stability in the region, eliminate terrorism, and respond to humanitarian needs<sup>16</sup>. The corresponding operational objectives are to stabilize Somalia, link Somalia to the region, prevent terrorists' safe-havens, promote development, and eradicate piracy. Understanding the objectives is the first step to framing the problem. The next step is to develop a better understanding of the operational environment.

The Operational Environment represents a complex problem. This complex problem requires a holistic evaluation. In order to help define the Operational Environment, it is necessary to conduct an analysis of the operational factors of time, space, and force.

#### Operational Factor of Time

Analysis of the operational factor of time points to three main points. The first point is the increase in the number of attacks over time. The second point is the relative time to react and respond to attacks. The last point is the time necessary to implement a long-term solution for Somalia.

Regardless of the solutions implemented to date, piracy is increasing at an incredible rate and threatens to further destabilize the entire region. The number of pirate attacks was less than 50 / year in 2004. This has ballooned to close to 450 / year in 2009<sup>17</sup>. This is a 1000% increase in 5 years.

The second point that must be considered is the amount of time it takes to react to an act of piracy. Piracy has been taking place further and further off the Somalia coast. The farthest attack to date is in excess of 1000+ nautical miles, nm, from the coast. As the pirates

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<sup>16</sup> US Department of State, "The United States Response to Piracy off the Coast of Somalia," <http://www.state.gov/t/pm/ppa/piracy/c32662.htm> (accessed 28 September 2010).

<sup>17</sup> International Maritime Organization, *REPORTS ON ACTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS Annual report 2009*, (London: International Maritime Organization, 29 March 2010), 29.

expand their area of operations, they make it more difficult for counter-piracy forces to stop them. At these extended ranges, unless a warship is relatively close, they will not arrive in time to prevent the pirates from taking over the targeted vessel.

Aviation can help us mitigate the problem. However, is aviation enough of a deterrent to stop a determined pirate attack and how long can they loiter? To be successful, counter-piracy forces need to shorten their reaction time.

The last point is it will take the international community a long time to solve the root problems of Somalia's instability. Somalia has been a failed nation for the last 18+ years. Internal strife, inter-clan fighting, warlords, famine, and invasions from adjacent African nations all have contributed to Somalia's problems. Somalia leads the list of top of failed states in the world.<sup>18</sup> It has taken the Coalition roughly a decade to stabilize Iraq. It will take at least a decade or two to stabilize a broken state like Somalia.

From the analysis of time, it is clear that there needs to be a balance between short and long term time requirements to effectively solve the problem of piracy and Somalia's instability. The counter-piracy forces needs to improve their ability to react to and suppress acts of piracy across a very large water space. They also must maintain a long-term vision of how Somalia and the region should be stabilized. After gaining a better understanding of the factor of time, the operational factor of space must be examined.

### Operational Factor of Space

The operational factor of space includes physical, human, and international / regional elements. These elements will provide a greater understanding of the scope of the problem. It is important to examine the problem broadly enough to develop a holistic solution.

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<sup>18</sup> Foreign Policy, "Failed States Index 2010," [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/06/21/2010\\_failed\\_states\\_index\\_interactive\\_map\\_and\\_rankings](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/06/21/2010_failed_states_index_interactive_map_and_rankings) (accessed 28 September 2010).

## Physical

The physical element of space that is impacted by Somalia piracy and instability encompasses the sea, land, and air spaces of East Africa, portions of the Saudi Peninsula (Yemen and Oman), and the international waters adjacent to Africa out to the limits of the pirate attacks. The instability in Somalia impacts the entire region. Therefore, Somalia and the adjacent countries must be thought of as an interconnected whole. Piracy has impacted international commerce from the Somalia coast to the Seychelles (1000+ nm from Somalia).<sup>19</sup> Airspace is the one domain that ties both the sea and land portions together and must encompass both of the former. Key terrain in this area is the choke point through the Gulf of Aden where approximately 22,000 ships / year transit.<sup>20</sup>

The ungoverned space of Somalia represents 627,337 square kilometers of land, 5,572 square nautical miles of territorial waters, and 637,657 square kilometers of airspace. Somalia claims an exclusive economic zone of 200 nautical miles.<sup>21</sup> These facts, coupled with the extended ocean areas that must be covered due to pirate activities, point to the requirement for a force with superior operational movement / maneuver and command and control capabilities.

## Human

The human element encompasses the political, military / security, economic, legal, social, and cultural aspects of Somalia and the adjacent countries of Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Yemen, Oman, and the Seychelles. The human element in this region

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<sup>19</sup> Inside Somalia, "Navies struggle with Somali pirates swarming military tactics," <http://insidesomalia.org/201004012939/News/Politics/Navies-struggle-with-Somali-pirates-swarming-military-tactics/Next.html> (accessed 20 October 2010).

<sup>20</sup> Mareeg online, "Somalia: Pirate's vital Routes attacks cause shipping costs to soar," <http://www.mareeg.com/fidsan.php?sid=8138&tirsan=3> (accessed 28 September 2010).

<sup>21</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Fact Book," <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/so.html> (accessed 01 October 2010).



represents an extremely interconnected and complex portion of the overall problem. Clan and family ties cross arbitrarily drawn international boundaries. It is beyond the scope of this paper to conduct a full analysis of the human element in this region. Therefore, this paper limits its analysis to Somalia since it is the root of instability and the source of piracy.

Somalia is a failed state and has not had an effective national government since 1992<sup>22</sup>. However, there are two regions, Somaliland and Puntland, which have working local governments. Currently the TFG is trying to fulfill the role of a legitimate national government. It is struggling, ineffective, and only controls a small portion of the country<sup>23</sup> (see figure 4). Al Shabaab, a radical Muslim group affiliated with Al Qaeda, is trying to overthrow the TFG and establish an Islamic government. It only controls a portion of the country as well.

The traditional power brokers in Somalia are the six major clans. They control power, governance, economics, and security throughout Somalia. They also influence the pirate gangs. All pirates, whether they are the leader or just a member, are part of the clan system.

Somalia is extremely poor, constantly faced with famine, high birth rates, high unemployment, and high mortality rates.<sup>24</sup> The populace is in constant need of humanitarian support to survive. Life in Somalia is short, brutal, and unpleasant by any standard.

#### International / Regional

The international and regional communities are impacted by Somalia's plight and the piracy it is breeding. The international shipping community has had to adjust the routing of

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<sup>22</sup>Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Fact Book," <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/so.html> (accessed 01 October 2010).

<sup>23</sup> Bruton, Bronwyn. Somalia a new approach. Council Special Report 52. New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relations, 2010. Page 7, 10,

<sup>24</sup> CIA Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/so.html> (accessed 100928)

ships, raise the cost of insurance, and implement self-defensive measures in an effort to protect international commerce.<sup>25</sup> The African Union has dedicated resources and troops to conduct peace support operations in an effort to stabilize Somalia.<sup>26</sup> There is a concerted effort by the international and regional communities to recognize and to support Somalia in solving their problems.

Somalia, the region, and the problems that they present require a holistic solution. The solution needs to account for the complexities present in the environment. The solution must be a Somalia solution that is supported by the country, the region, and the international communities. A United States only solution will not work. This complex environment becomes even more complex after the examination of the operational factor of force.

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<sup>25</sup> Raymond Gilpin, *Counting the Costs of Somali Piracy*, United States Institute of Peace Working Paper, (Washington, D.C: United States Institute for Peace, 2007), 11.

<sup>26</sup> African Union, "African Union Mission in Somalia," <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/auc/departments/psc/amisom/amisom.htm> (accessed 01 October 2010).

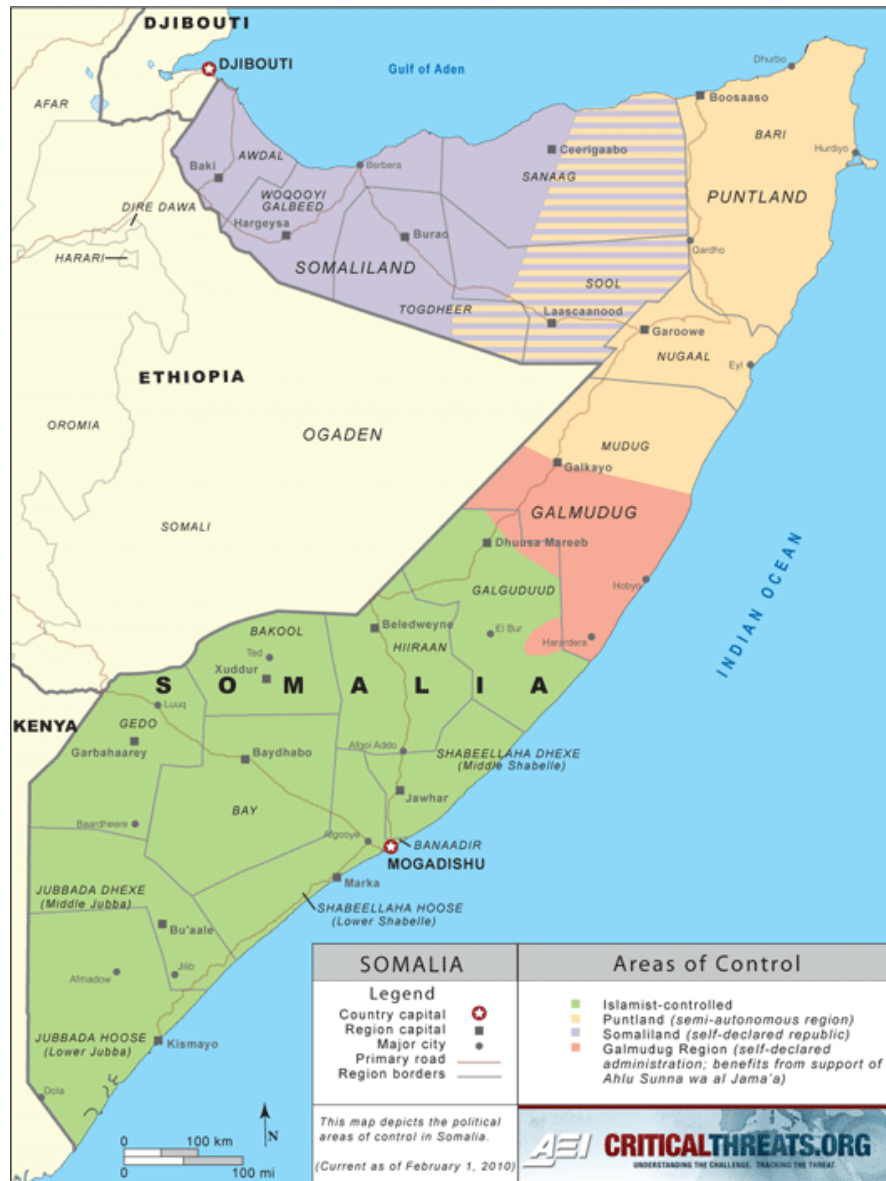


Figure 4 Political Situation in Somalia February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010<sup>27</sup>

### Operational Factor of Force

The operational factor of force includes the various coalition, international, regional, and local forces operating in the area. Once they have been defined, it is necessary to examine the center of gravity, COG, for Somali at the operational level. Lastly, the

<sup>27</sup> AEI Critical Threats.org, “Political Map of Somalia February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010,” <http://www.criticalthreats.org/somalia/somalia-conflict-maps-islamist-and-political#political> (accessed 10 October 2010).

relationship between pirates and clans must be examined to develop a deeper understanding of the problem.

There are multiple international, regional, and military organizations involved in Somali trying to support the nation and / or solve piracy. In the military context the major players are CJTF-HOA, the Coalition Maritime Force (CTF-151 and CTF-150), European Union naval task force, NATO naval elements, and the African Union (peace keepers supporting the TFG). Additionally, there are multiple countries that are executing independent naval operations to protect their own national interests. Chinese and Russian naval vessels in the Gulf of Aden are examples of this. Somalia itself presents a web of different forces TFG, Clans, Pirates, and Al Shabaab.

The center of gravity in Somali is the Clans (Table 1 and Figure 5). The clans hold the key to stabilizing the country and ending the pirate threat. They are the real power brokers in Somalia. The clan system influences all aspects of Somali life, culture, government, judicial, and the economy. Pirate networks are composed of clan elements. The Hawiya and the Darood Clans dominate the areas where pirate gangs operate.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Raymond Gilpin, *Counting the Costs of Somali Piracy*, United States Institute of Peace Working Paper, (Washington, D.C: United States Institute for Peace, 2007), 7.

Operational Center of Gravity = Clan	
Critical Capability:	Critical Requirements:
CC1: Ability to lead / influence the masses	<b>Clan elder</b> / leader, means to communicate (cell phones, radio, TV, internet, word of mouth)
CC2: Ability to Govern	<b>Clan elder</b> / leader, means to communicate (cell phones, radio, TV, internet, word of mouth)
CC3: Ability to provide Justice	<b>Clan elder</b> / leader, laws / rules, population that supports judgements
CC4: Ability to sustain the members of the clan	Supplies (food, water, shelter, medicine), means to store supplies, transportation (vehicles, animals, boats), Economy (Legitimate - fishing, farming), Economy (Illegitimate - <b>piracy</b> , kidnapping, drugs)
CC5: Ability to use violence on land to achieve goals	Militia + Pirates (Leaders, troops, equipment - (weapons, vehicles, ammunition), communications - (cell phone, radio, messenger, internet), ship boarding equipment, <b>home base, support of people</b>
CC6: Ability to conduct piracy	Leader, troops, equipment (weapons, skiffs, mother ship, communications), navigation (GPS), fuel, supplies, intelligence on ships (cargo, routes), <b>freedom of movement at sea, home base, safe port, support of people, support of elders, large number of unemployed youths to recruit</b>
<b>Bolded = Critical Vulnerabilities / Areas to Leverage</b>	

Table 1 Somalia COG Analysis

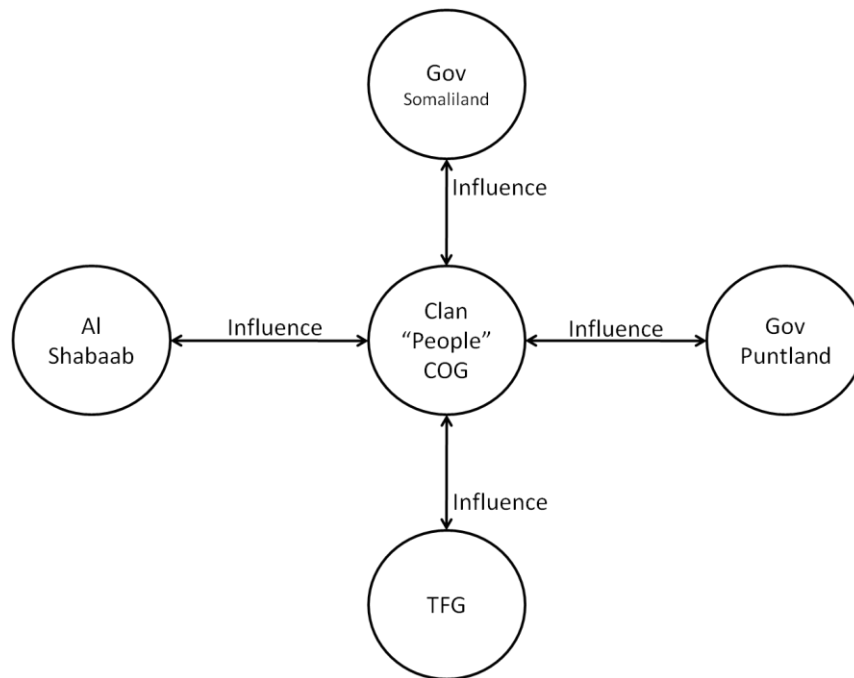


Figure 5 Somalia COG relationship to Major actors in Somalia

Pirate gangs should not be thought of separately from the clans. They are clan militias that have turned to piracy as a way of life.<sup>29</sup> The pirate networks are adaptive, smart, and have the potential to cooperate with each other. With the influx of large amounts of cash

<sup>29</sup> Raymond Gilpin, Counting the Costs of Somali Piracy, United States Institute of Peace Working Paper, (Washington, D.C: United States Institute for Peace, 2007), 5.

through ransom money, it is conceivable that piracy could become Somalia's main economic driver. Somalia has become the next Barbary Coast.

Based on a better understanding of the Somalia COG and the environment, friendly forces must have certain capabilities to operate effectively in this environment and solve the problem (see Table 2). The United States should not provide all the required force capabilities. It should strive to support and to integrate regional and coalition capabilities first before using its own capabilities. This is more acceptable for the people of Somalia and provides a longer term solution for the region. There are some that don't think Somalia is worth the worries or the efforts of the United States.

<b>Friendly Force Capabilities</b>	
1	Balanced Multi-National, Regional, and Inter-Agency organization
2	Ability to integrate and establish unity of effort with Regional organizations
3	Ability to operate across air, land, and sea domains
4	Ability to conduct nation building / stability operations in Somalia
5	Ability to C2 multi-national force
6	Ability to identify and deter pirate attacks prior to commencement
7	Superior operational mobility to cover the length and breadth of the assigned area of operations
8	Ability to have an enduring presence (indefinite sustainment)
9	Ability to deter piracy
10	Ability to legally prosecute pirates
11	Ability to destroy pirate forces, enclaves, and facilities both at sea and ashore
12	Ability to conduct opposed Visitation Boarding Search and Seizure, VBSS, of pirated vessels

**Table 2 Friendly Force Capability Requirements**

### Counter Arguments

The United States willingness to become involved with Somalia is touchy after our experience with trying to help in the early 90s. The American failure with Black Hawk Down and the subsequent pullout has jaded most Americans towards staying away from Somalia. There are arguments against expanding our current efforts to curb piracy and not to become involved in Somalia's deeper problems.

The first argument is the United States' current efforts are good enough and it does not want to get bogged down with forces or resources tied ashore. Even with the current efforts, piracy continues to expand in frequency and in scope. An examination of the yearly statistics, compiled by the International Maritime Organization, shows that piracy off of the East Coast of Africa (Somalia) is increasing at an incredible rate (see table 3). The number of incidents has skyrocketed. Additionally, the range at which pirates are attacking ships has increased over time as well (see figure 6 from EU NAVFOR). If the pirate's operational range continues to increase each year, it is possible that they will be able to pirate vessels off the coast of India. This increase in range would allow the pirates to prey on a new major sea line of communication. The problem has to be addressed and the answer is ashore. The United States can support the efforts of international and regional partners to stabilize Somalia while minimizing permanent United States military involvement ashore.

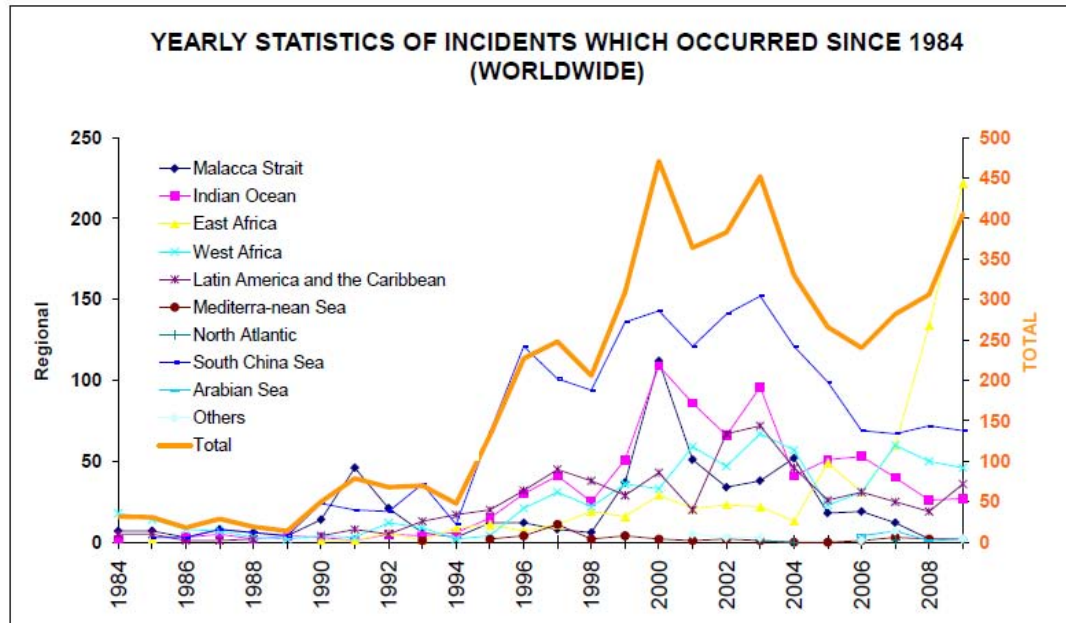


Table 3 International Maritime Organization Yearly Statistics<sup>30</sup>

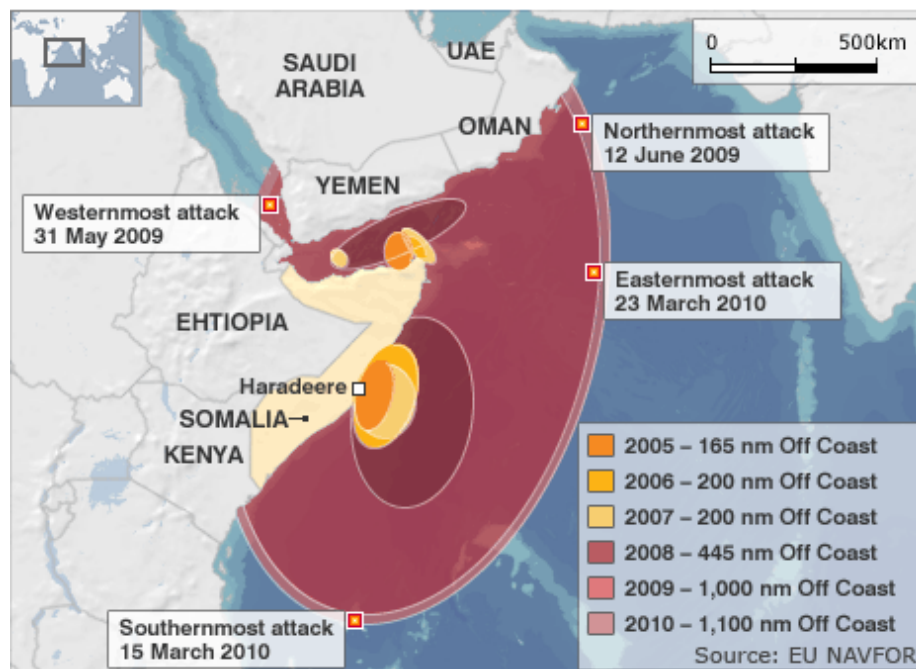


Figure 6 Expansion of Pirate Operations<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> International Maritime Organization, *REPORTS ON ACTS OF PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS Annual report 2009*, (London: International Maritime Organization, 29 March 2010), 29.

<sup>31</sup> Inside Somalia, "Navies struggle with Somali pirates swarming military tactics," <http://insidesomalia.org/201004012939/News/Politics/Navies-struggle-with-Somali-pirates-swarming-military-tactics/Next.html> (accessed 20 October 2010).



The second argument is the international community does not need to worry about piracy; it does not have a large impact on the global economy or the United States. Piracy does impact the global economy. The international shipping industry has lost both time and money as they have had to reroute ships around Somalia and pay increasing insurance premiums. This loss of money is passed on to consumers around the world. More importantly, piracy violates every nations' right of freedom of the high seas.<sup>32</sup>

The third argument is this is not a United States problem; it is a problem for African nations to solve. Somalia is an international problem to solve. Africa and the African Union don't have the resources to effectively tackle this problem. Somalia has been a failed state for the last 18+ years. Unless the international community helps address the issue, it will not be resolved. The African Union presents the best regional actor to address the problem. However, they need the international communities' help and resources.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based off of the operational analysis it is apparent that our current constructs and efforts fall short. AFRICOM and CENTCOM need to make adjustments supporting the attainment of our nation's operational and strategic objectives. They need to make adjustments in four major areas: Mission, C2, Area of Operations, and Forces assigned.

The current missions are not holistic. They fail to address the root causes of the problem – failed state of Somalia. They are focused on partial solutions treating symptoms rather than the root causes. The United States needs a long term solution to obtain its operational and strategic objectives in the region.

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<sup>32</sup> United Nations, "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea," [http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention\\_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos\\_e.pdf](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf) (accessed 01 October 2010).

The C2 is fragmented and disjointed. There is no unity of command and little unity of effort between all the forces operating in the region. No one effectively coordinates and integrates US, regional, and international elements of power (diplomatic, informational, military, and economic) to solve the problem.

The current operating areas fragment the operating environment, prevent unity of command, and make unity of effort difficult to establish. The boundary between the Combatant commanders creates friction. It hinders effective and timely coordination.

The forces assigned are inadequate for the job. They don't have the capability to operate across the range of military operations. They are not capable of stabilizing Somalia and they are not effective at stopping piracy.

From the above conclusions, the operational problem can be deduced as: How does the United States support the stabilization of Somalia, eradicate piracy, and integrate Somalia into the region as an effective partner in regional stability? All while overcoming the problems of a fragmented and failed state, remaining neutral between the Somalia clans, integrating multiple nations' objectives, and doing it in a way that is palatable to the Somali citizens and the nations of East Africa.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The first step is to establish a Multi-national headquarters to achieve unity of command / unity of effort. All military forces; United States, coalition, NATO, and European Union; operating in the area bounded by the new Operating Area should be placed under the command of this headquarters. This will allow for unity of command / unity of effort. It will also allow for the effective integration of military, interagency, international,

and NGO efforts. Ideally, this Multi-National headquarters would be commanded by a member of the African Union.

The second step is to adjust the mission to address the root cause of piracy in Somalia. The mission should focus on stabilizing Somalia and supporting its development as an effective nation and eventual inclusion in the region as an effective partner. The internationally recognized TFG must be supported. However, the Multi-National Force (MNF) needs to simultaneously work with those portions of Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland, where semi-working governments exist and stabilization can be accelerated. Overall, the solution must be holistic. A holistic solution will support the attainment of long-term operational and strategic objectives. This includes the elimination of piracy as an intermediate objective.

The third step is to establish a new Joint Operations Area that encompasses the sea, land, and air spaces of East Africa, portions of the Saudi Peninsula (Yemen and Oman), and the international waters adjacent to Africa out to the limits of the pirate attacks. This new area of operations needs to be large enough to allow the MNF to integrate the efforts of the entire region. By having a single all encompassing area of operation, it will eliminate seams and enhance integration of all.

The last step is to adjust the forces assigned. The United States should establish a single Joint Task Force that is incorporated into the larger MNF structure as one of the contributing nations. The force should be a flexible general purpose force that can operate across the spectrum of domains (Air/Land/Sea/Space/Information) and across the Range of Military Operations. The United States main focus should be to support the development and the capabilities of the African Union forces.

The United States should ensure the MNF has all the capabilities required in Table 2. This is necessary to allow the MNF to stabilize Somalia. Due to political considerations (domestic and African) United States forces should not directly conduct stability operations within Somali. However, they can train and support those African nations that do. The United States forces can also concurrently conduct maritime, expeditionary, and strike operations from the sea to destroy terrorist cells and deter / eliminate piracy afloat and ashore. These efforts would be complimentary to the main effort which is ashore: African Union stabilization of Somalia. The United States and the MNF has to use both carrots and sticks to apply leverage to the clans. They are the key to stability and piracy in Somalia.

## **CLOSING**

Piracy is a cancer that impacts the international community. To treat only the symptoms is not enough. The root cause of piracy is the key and it is found ashore in Somalia. The United States cannot be the lead nation to solve this problem. It can play a vital supporting role to the African Union and the international community. A regionally developed solution that is acceptable to Somalia and the international community is the only answer that will stand the test of time.

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